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UAA Mat-Su Home of the Mat-Su College Arctic Dragons

Mat-Su Monitor

SUMMER 2024 FREE VOLUME 47 NUMBER 5

Portrait of Emeritus Director Colberg unveiled

By Nannie Cain

On Friday, May 3rd, the campus community gathered to honor former Director Emeritus Talis Colberg. There were two reasons to honor him on that day in particular. First, UAA Chancellor Sean Parnell had recently been awarded the honored rank of Director Emeritus. This honorary title is granted only to those retirees who have distinguished themselves in their service to the University. Second, the day marked the unveiling of Emeritus Director Colberg's official portrait. Painted by noted artist Dean Larson, the portrait will hang in first floor FSM hallway alongside portraits of past directors.

Mat-Su College Alum author HD Foxe exclusive interview. Page 9

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2024 Student Showcase

On Saturday, we had some wonderful presentations for Student Showcase 2024. They covered a range of topics, including art in math, postpartum care in the US, and the emotional expectations of those who love us.

Our winners were . . .

1.First Place: Isabella Krostek
2.Second Place: Vanessa Reyes
3.Third Place: Amber Godin

Story on page 2; More pictures on 11.

School Funding: Crisis for Everyone?

By Elaine Ganchenko

Some of us may or may not have heard of the current situation with the school funding crisis. Unfortunately, though the law has been broken, only part of the problem is being addressed. Today I will cover the basics of the need to know so you all can form your own opinions given all the facts.

Sometime 10-11 years ago in 2013-2014, legislators decided to support homeschooling by changing correspondence schooling rules. They wanted the parents of children to be able to go outside of their district to buy services for their children, pay for kids' lessons, pay for sports, and buy other curricula besides the curriculum provided by the school. Despite the Alaska constitution not supporting the law they made in support of homeschooling, the legislators decided to push the law through anyway, before amending the constitution. This is when the problems started, when someone tried to do the right thing, the wrong way.

> This pertains as much to the brick-and-mortar schools as to the correspondence schools.

Life went on and no one did anything about the broken constitution, and the correspondence schools gave out money for everything: music lessons, sports, and any other extracurricular activities. April 12, 2024, is when things changed for us when on a Friday afternoon the judge handed down his 33-page decision...

"This Court echoes the State's concerns regarding how organizations are characterized and the 'gray area

See* SCHOOLS *page 11

Whittier

By Sasha Gap

With the snow melting and trees starting to bloom, Alaska is about to see another beautiful summer. Although there are many astonishing areas all over Alaska, there is a place worth visiting at least once. Whittier, a city around 60 miles from Anchorage, has some amazing views and trails that really show Alaska's beauty. To get to the city, you have to go through the 2.5-mile Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel which is the longest tunnel in the United States! After a short drive, you will be able to see the Begich Towers Condominium, an apartment building that houses the whole city, which has a church, convenience store, and even a school. Gigantic cruise ships are often parked near the pier and boats are lined up at the dock throughout the drive along Whittier. The city is small but captivating. At the end of Whittier, there is an abandoned military structure worth viewing that once was the building that housed the entire town. Leaving the city, Emerald Cove Trail,

See* WHITTIER *page 11

Upcoming events:

May 20: summer classes begin for 10-week session and first 5-week session.

May 21: instructor approval needed to add classes for 10-week session and first 5-week session.

May 27: no classes, campus closed.

May 28: deadline to drop classes for 100% refund for 10-week session and first 5-week session.

June 27: summer classes begin for second 5-week session.

June 28: instructor approval needed to add classes for second 5-week session.

July 4-5: no classes, campus closed.

July 8: deadline to drop classes for 100% refund for second 5-week session.

July 26: Summer graduation application deadline.

August 16 to Sept 2: visit the Mat-Su College cabin at the State Fair's red trail.

August 23: New Student Orientation. Register at matsu.alaska.edu

August 26: fall classes begin.

September 2: no classes, campus closed.

September 3: instructor approval required to add classes.

September 6: deadline to drop class for 100% refund.

Mat-Su College Hosts Out of the Darkness Walk

Hank Jones

After many months of planning, Mat-Su College and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention hosted the campus's first Out of the Darkness Walk on Saturday, May 4. Over 200 participants registered for the event. Together they raised over $16,000 dollars for suicide prevention activities.

The event began with a brief ceremony honoring those lost to or

See* WALKERS *page 6

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Three students present work at annual Student Showcase

By Gem Stone

The annual Student Showcase was held on Saturday, April 6. Three students were selected to present their A-level work. These students were selected by a committee of faculty and staff who selected from a larger pool of applicants.

Before the presentations began, the committee set up the room with flowers, balloons, tablecloths, and snacks. The emphasis on appearance made sense since the presenters' family and friends were in attendance.

Amber Godin was the first presenter. She presented a Writing 213 paper that had earned her an A. Responding to the prompt "what was the heaviest thing you carried," she talked about weight of expectations from family and peers. Specifically, she referenced the expectations those around her had, as she cared for her dying grandmother. She incorporated a good deal of audience interaction into her presentation, including instructing one member of the audience to punch another, having another member of the audience attempt to open a can of beans, and feeding an unhealthy donut to yet another. Trust this writer when she says it all made sense.

Next, Vanessa Reyes talked about her experience with becoming a new mother and postpartum complications. In line with this, she had written a paper for Writing 213 on comparing postpartum care in a number of countries. She began by noting that "the quality and type of postpartum care varies significantly across countries." on a rise in postpartum deaths. For instance, the maternal mortality per 100,000 births is 3 in the Netherlands, 4.8 in Australia, 8 in Finland, and a huge 23.8 in the U.S. In line with this, another study said the US has 3 times the maternal mortality rates of countries with similar economies. The US was the only country in the study without universal health care, which leaves at least 8 million women of reproductive age uninsured. But Vanessa found that even those with health insurance may not receive adequate postpartum care. For example, the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 allows for 12 weeks of unpaid leave, and even then, only 59% of women are covered. 25% of women return to work just two weeks after giving birth. Disturbingly, the US provider-to-live birth ratio is 12 per 1000, six times lower than other countries (providers are midwives and OBGYNs). As Vanessa said in closing, the "US treats birth with less concern than breast augmentation." An effective and sobering presentation, one audience member called the US data "embarrassing and frightening."

Finally, Isabella Krostek presented "math becomes art," a project she did for one of Dr. Rachel Graham's math classes. The class was designed "to transition people into college mathematics." As such, the course began with fundamentals, but soon weeks move into lines and linear equations, for instance. Isabella's project was to combine art and lines. The result was beautiful drawing full of lines and shapes. Its display elicited an audible "wow." Making the lines for the artwork involved lots of "stressful decision making," keeping in mind negative space, contrast, shape. She had to consider how art and math are connected. She said, "nothing is more exciting than when textbook ideas meet reality, and something is born." One audience member said the center portion of the drawing reminded her of a Georgia O'Keeffe flower. Isabella said she had done an art appreciation class at the same time, where she encountered and enjoyed a Georgia O'Keeffe painting. Another notable aspect of Isabella's work is that she did the work digitally with software called Procreate. This helped her overcome a tremor that made drawing straight lines difficult. As she said, "I could not have done this without assistive technology. I want to urge other people to try digital art -- it is much more assistive than traditional art. With traditional methods of making art the line you make is the line you get, you don't really get to go back."

After the presentations, the Showcase Committee adjourned to decide who would win first, second and third place prizes. As they deliberated, the presenters and audience ate a lunch catered by the campus's Rolled Gold cafeteria. On the committee's return, winners were announced and given prizes such as gift cards and tuition waivers.

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Disclaimer

The Mat-Su Monitor is the student newspaper of Mat-Su College. The Monitor aims to report college news and serve as a forum for student writing. The Monitor seeks submissions of news, editorials, and short fiction from all students, staff, and faculty of Mat-Su College. All students are invited to attend the Monitor's weekly meetings. Details on participating in or submitting content to the Monitor can be found at https://matsu.alaska.edu/monitor

The Mat-Su Monitor is funded by the Mat-Su College Student Government Association and our advertisers. For information on advertising in the Monitor contact Micah Muer at mwmuer@alaska.edu or 907-745-9758.

The opinions expressed the Monitor article are solely those of its authors. They do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policy of the college, its students and employees, or the wider University of Alaska system.

Submissions policy

Students are invited to submit articles and letters to the editor to matsu.monitor@alaska.edu or at https://matsu.alaska.edu/monitor. The Mat-Su Monitor will not accept anonymous submissions, though with prior arrangement articles of a sensitive nature can appear anonymously. All submissions are subject to editing and will only appear with the approval of the editor.

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7" by 7"	$175
Full page	$300
Full page, back	$375

Moreover, the Monitor runs relatively few ads, which ensures that your ad will stand out. Finally, advertising in the Monitor demonstrates your support of local students. For more on advertising, call 907-745-9758.

Math Question for the Summer

By Justice Darby

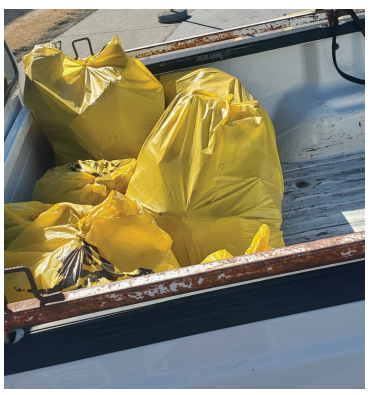
Integrate the following function

$$\int \frac{x^2 - 3}{x\,(x^2 + 4)}\,dx$$

Solution on page 11

Earth Day sends students scouring campus for trash

By Milagros Brandt



As a late commemoration of Earth Day, a handful of Mat-Su College students volunteered to pick up trash on April 24. Donning gloves and safety vests, they swept through the sprawling grounds, bagging whatever litter they came across. They eventually piled up around 10 large bags of trash for the maintenance crew to dispose of. As usual, the event was spearheaded by beloeved math professor Joey Pavia.

MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Play an important role on the Mat-Su College Campus. Being on a committee can help to enhance your career, give you a chance to give back to your community, and give you the opportunity to challenge yourself by helping to shape your society.

Join a Mat-Su College Student Government Council Committee

Or join one of the student clubs.

Clubs are a great place to meet like minded people, have fun, learn new things and relax.

- Alaska Native Culture Club
- Game Club
- Stephen King Book Club
- Arroba Club
- Math Club
- Mat-Su Monitor

Joining a committee or club looks good on resumes as well as gives you a chance to connect with fellow students, staff and faculty. You owe it to yourself to try them out. If you don't see a club that interests you, can start one of your own. Student Government will fund you up to $300 to cover expenses. You can pick up a form at the Student Government office in JKB 114, near the café.

Mat-Su College Students Advocate in Juneau

By Amber Godin

The Mat-Su College Student Government President (I, Amber) and Senator Kaia Richardson went on an eventful and packed four day advocacy trip to Juneau on February 24th with the Coalition of Student leaders to advocate for the Mat-Su campus regarding issues we find important to our students. Over the course of two days we prepped continually, researching and practicing our points. The next two days we spent in 30 different meetings with Alaska Legislators and even got to attend Mary Peltoa's speech, being seated in Speaker of the House Tilton's personal reserved seating.

During these meetings we advocated for deferred maintenance, R1 status for UAF, proper compensation for staff and faculty, increased campus security, as well as student wellbeing. Legislators were attentive and open to hearing our concerns as students and the matters important to us as well as openly supportive of us.

Deferred maintenance (general wear and tear that needs to be fixed at some point) resulted in several legislators asking for pictures of the ongoing deferred maintenance issues such as KPC campus roof collapsing due to deferred maintenance and their inability to afford to fix it.

Proper compensation for staff and faculty was well heard as we explained that the best way to keep our teachers and professors is to pay them fairly to keep them in Alaska, a place where cost of living is high. We also spoke to the dire importance our staff and faculty have on the learning environment and how their wellbeing directly impacts us as students. Higher turnover equals overall increased costs to bring more people in to train them. Proper compensation was a top priority.

Increased campus security was also of high importance to the Mat-Su campus. We spoke of stalking incidents on campus as well, as while we do have Sam for security on campus (and she does well for us), there is a need to have onsite security that isn't borrowed from UAA as well as a central location for it on campus. Students told the legislators stories of personal encounters, and fear for their safety as security such as cameras in dorms were nonexistent, or overworked security officers who were stretched thin, and KPC spoke of their absolute lack of security. Legislators were moved and concerned to hear of such issues and were attentive to our need for increased security.

Student wellbeing was a topic near and dear to my heart that I shared with legislators and even resulted in Representative Alyse Galvin setting up a surprising and very exciting meeting between NAMI (National Alliance of Mental Illness) and I, where we discussed options of increasing mental health resources on campus. We also spoke to the need of onsite campus counselors, and increased need for counselors on UAA campus and how mental health directly impacts student retention, state success, and proper education. As well as mental health we also spoke to address food insecurity and the difficulty college students face with food while trying to pay for education.

Overall the trip to Juneau was a massive success and we look forward to next year and the changes we can help make through advocacy to make the best learning environment for our students.

SUMMER CLASSES

ANTHROPOLOGY
*Alaska Native Cultures

ART
Two-Dimensional Design
*History of Western Art I

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
*Business Foundations

CHEMISTRY
*General Chemistry I & Lab
*General Chemistry II & Lab
*Intro to General Chemistry
*Intro to Organic/Biochemistry
Chemistry Skills & Problem Solving

ECONOMICS
*Principles of Macroeconomics

GEOGRAPHY
*Intro to Global Geography

GEOLOGY
*Planet Earth

HISTORY
*History of Alaska
*History of United States
*Western Civilization I
*Western Civilization II

MATHEMATICS & STATISTICS
*Calculus I
*Calculus II
*Elementary Statistics
Intermediate Algebra
Prealgebra

MEDICAL ASSISTING
Medical Terminology
Your Health & Social Services Career

MUSIC
*Music Appreciation

PARAMEDICAL TECHNOLOGY
*Paramedicine III Lab

PHILOSOPHY
*Introduction to Philosophy

PHYSICS
*College Physics I

POLITICAL SCIENCE
*Intro to Political Science

PSYCHOLOGY
*Introduction to Psychology
*Lifespan Development

QUANTITATIVE SKILLS
*College Algebra for Calculus
*Trigonometry

WRITING
*Writing & the Professions
*Writing Across Contexts
Intro to College Writing

This list is subject to change. Visit matsu.alaska.edu and click "Course schedules" for the most current list of scheduled classes.

**Indicates class meets General Education requirements (GERs)*

Semester runs May 20 - August 3

FALL CLASSES

Fall 2024 Registration

To meet with an academic advisor, call 907-262-0383 or schedule an appointment online.

Registration Schedule
March 25 - Schedule viewable in UAOnline
March 29 - Veteran Students (Walk In/Paper Only)
April 1 - Admitted Seniors (90+ credits)
April 2 - Admitted Juniors (60-89 credits)
April 3 - Admitted Sophomores (30-59 credits)
April 4 - Admitted Freshmen (0-29 credits)
April 8 - Open Registration

ACCOUNTING
Income Tax Preparation
Introduction to Computerized Accounting
Principles of Financial Accounting I
Principles of Financial Accounting II

ANTHROPOLOGY
*Alaska Native Cultures

ART
*Art Appreciation
Beginning Drawing
Beginning Painting
Color Design
*History of Western Art II
Intermediate Drawing
Intro to Art Education

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
*Business Foundations
Business Law I
Intro to Real Estate Management
Marketing Practices
Survey of Finance

BIOLOGY
*Human Anatomy & Physiology I
*Human Anatomy & Physiology II
*Introductory Biology
*Introductory Biology Lab
Introductory Microbiology for Health Sciences & Lab

CHEMISTRY
*Intro to General Chemistry & Lab
*General Chemistry I Lab
*General Chemistry II & Lab
Intro to Organic/Biochemistry

COMMUNICATION
*Fund Oral Communication
*Public Speaking

COMPUTER & ELECTRONIC TECH
CCNA 1
CCNA 3
Computer Concepts in Business
Customer Service Fundamentals
Individual Technical Project
Industry Net Infrastructure
Intro to Information Security
Industry PC Configuration Essentials
Industry Workplace Experience
IT Project Management
PC Operating Systems
PC Technician Fundamentals

ECONOMICS
*Prin of Macroeconomics
*Prin of Microeconomics
Intro Stats for Business and Economics

EMERGENCY SERVICES
Emergency Med Tech I
Paramedicine I Lab

ENGLISH
*Global Literature and Culture
Intro to Creative Writing
Advanced Technical Writing

GEOGRAPHY
Discover Alaska Physical Geography

GEOLOGY
Planet Earth

HEALTH CARE ASSISTING
Certified Nurse Aide

HISTORY
*East Asian Civilization I
*History of U.S. I
*History of U.S. II
the Second World War
*Western Civilization I
*Western Civilization II

HUMAN SERVICES
Introduction to Population
Human Services and Disabilities
Substance Use Disorder

JUSTICE
*Intro to Juvenile Justice
*Theories of Crime and Offense

LANGUAGES
*Elementary ASL
Intermediate ASL
*Elementary Japanese I
*Intermediate Japanese I
*Elementary Spanish I
*Elementary Spanish II
Structure/Meanings of Language

MATHEMATICS & STATISTICS
*Calculus I
*Calculus II
*Calculus III
*Elementary Statistics
Intermediate Algebra
*Algebra for Mngrl & Soc Sciences

MEDICAL ASSISTING
Medical Terminology
Essentials of Human Disease
Your Health & Social Services Career

MUSIC
*Music Appreciation

PHILOSOPHY
*Ancient & Medieval Philosophy
*Intro to Logic
*Introduction to Philosophy

PHYSICS
*College Physics I & Lab
*General Physics I & Lab
General Physics I Problem Solving

POLITICAL SCIENCES
*Intro to American Government
*Intro to Political Science

PSYCHOLOGY
*Introduction to Psychology
*Lifespan Development

QUANTITATIVE SKILLS
*College Algebra for Calculus
*Trigonometry

REFRIGERATION & HEATING
Refrig & AC I
Elec Circuit Refrig & Heat
Fundamentals of Heating
HVAC/R Codes

SOCIOLOGY
*Introduction to Sociology

VETERINARY ASSISTING
Intro to Veterinary Profession
Veterinary Office Procedures
Introduction to Small Animals
Handling & Behavior: Sm Animals
Vet Anatomy & Physiology

VETERINARY TECHNICIAN
Intro to Veterinary Tech
Veterinary Medical Terminology

WRITING
Intro to College Writing
*Writing Across Contexts
*Writing & the Professions
*Writing & the Sciences
Accelerated Learning Program

This list is subject to change.

**Indicates class meets general education requirements (GERs).*

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Fall Semester Starts August 26th

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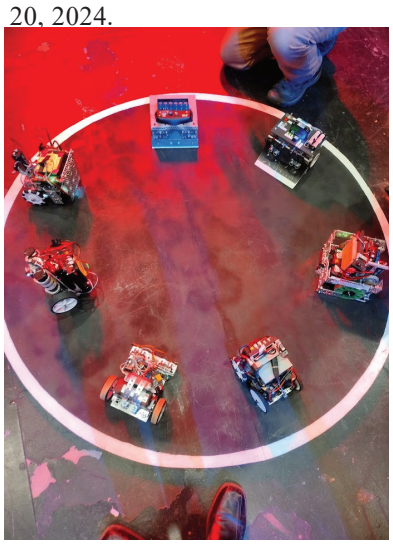
Robot Carnage!

By Justice Darby

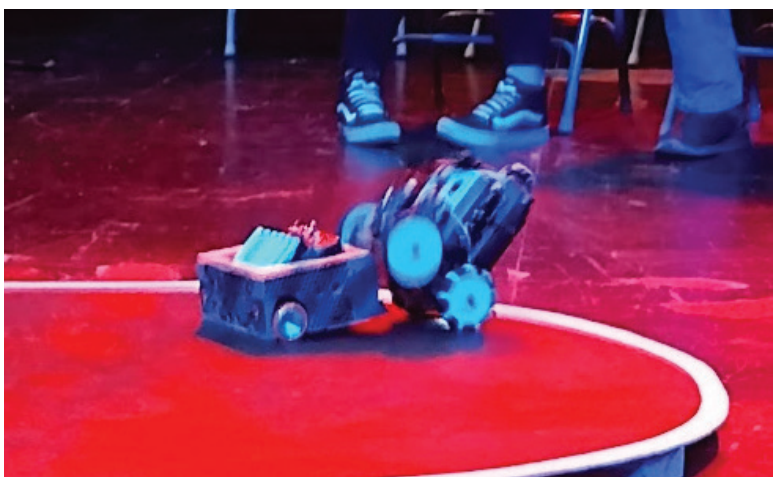
Come one, come all, robotic carnage has just occurred! The annual Mat-Su College Sumo Robot competition has just happened on Saturday, April 20, 2024.

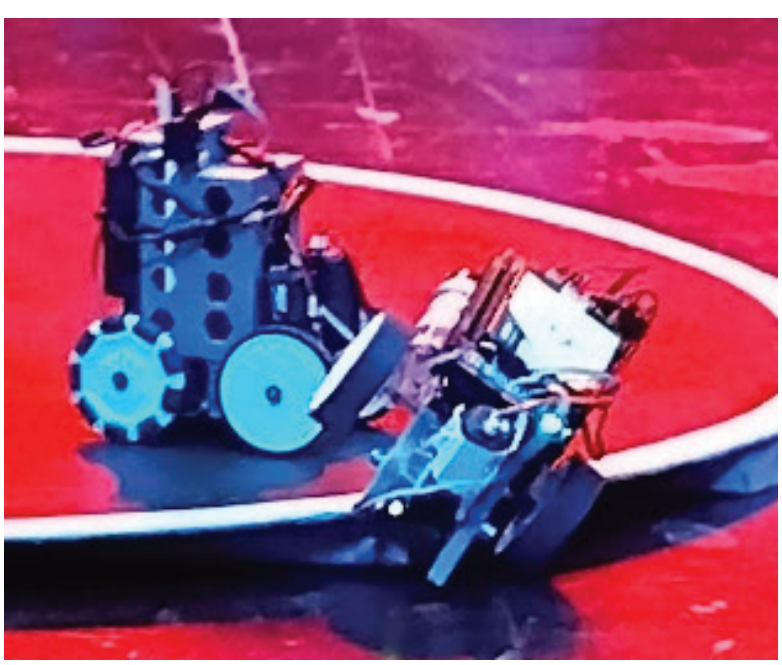


The competition was fierce for all the competitors involved with improved robots from last year and new teams competing. In one corner, we had Wasilla High School. Entering with four teams this year consisting of four robots: The Cube, Atlas, P-Body, and Sumooooooooo!, the competition was set to be really fierce. In the other corner, we had Mat-Su College. With three robots: Karen, Karen 2, and Short Fused, the competitors looked to have a wide range of effectiveness.

The battle was long and hard fought for all the robots with acts of vengeance, robots disobeying orders by not connecting, wheels falling off, and robots dive bombing off the arena, but ultimately, we had three winners. In first place, we had a fierce fight between Karen and Karen 2 for who would take the first place parking spot, typical, with only one Karen winning it… Karen! For second place, the battle was hard fought between the Karen doppelganger, Karen 2, and the roving block on wheels, The Cube. However, only one robot can take the prize. Even while disobeying orders from their creator, The Cube fought long and hard, but the furiousness of Karen 2 demanding to speak to the manager for not getting first place was too much for The Cube. In the end, Karen 2 got second place while The Cube got third place.

After that, all the robots from the competition went in for a battle royal! In a Mexican standoff, the robots stared each other down, and then the go-ahead was given to active! Immediately, the robots came on and charged right in! Many robots lost and were pushed off the side of the arena while other robots ended up chasing down the robots they pushed off in a bid to satisfy their sparklust! Alas, the might of the Karens won this event as well with the Karen doppelganger, Karen 2, finally having spoken to the managers, well judges in this case, to get another win.





Student Sticker Contest

Congratulations go out to Gracie Johnson, this year's winner of the Mat-Su College (MSC) Sticker contest. This year there were six fantastic designs to pick from and the marketing committee had a tough choice. In the end, Johnson's design won the contest and with it, a three credit MSC tuition waiver.

This was the fourth year MSC has released a commemorative sticker and the third time it has been designed by a student. Past winners include Madeline Maher and Kaia Richardson.

Perhaps it was fated that Johnson would add her name to this growing legacy. She says, "In middle school, I loved drawing scholarly dragons on my schoolwork. So, I thought, what's better than to draw Sophia, the Arctic dragon, reading on her iconic stack of books? I knew it would be perfect for my design."

MSC will use her design to make stickers that will be handed out at the Alaska State Fair this summer and on campus after that. The design will also likely end up on some other promotions including t-shirts. Something Johnson is very excited about. "I am excited to see my logo all around the school and I'm so thankful for the opportunity to share my love of art and education with others through my sticker!"

Be sure to grab one when you stop by the MSC Cabin at the Alaska State Fair this summer.

Pie Day: A Seemingly Irrational Action for a Rational Cause

By Justice Darby

On Thursday, April 25, the Mat-Su College Math Club hosted its annual Pie Day event. Students for the event were allowed to spend a little bit of money to throw a plate of whipped topping at a staff or faculty member with their consent. While it seems silly to hold an event where students could throw whipped topping at staff and faculty, it is going to a good cause. All proceeds for Pie Day went to the Alaska Family Services in Palmer. The Alaska Family Services offer a wide variety of services from child care assistance to alcohol safety programs.

Faculty art show

By Elma Leal

On April 5th the Mat-Su College art department held its second out of three spring art shows. Unlike the first and the last, which showcase student art, this one was devoted to the art of University of Alaska Anchorage art faculty. Several professors displayed work ranging from videos to sculptures to paintings. Most pieces were for sale.

See Walkers ***page 1***

impacted by suicide. DJ ATM -- describing himself as Alaska's most energetic DJ -- then briefly got the walkers dancing, as if to prepare them for the coming walk. Then began the walk. This took no more than a half-hour. After walkers made it back to the gathering point, they were free to grab free coffee, grilled cheese sandwiches, or tomato soup. It was the perfect way to cap off a cold morning stroll!

For more on the American Foundation for Suicide Provention, see afsp.org. If you are in crisis, call or text 988.

Congratulations to our 2023-2024 graduates!

This is a list of summer 2023, fall 2023, spring 2024, and summer 2024 graduates. It is current as of May 06.

ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE

Accounting

Mariann Kerns

Julia Palko

Computer Systems and Networking Technology

Jordan Martin

General Business

Aidan Barnett

Blainey Dunyon

Kiley Hall

Nolan Reid

Kassidy Shoemaker

Human Services

Jillian Bowman

Refrigeration and Heat Technology

James Smith

ASSOCIATE OF ARTS

General Program

Emily Beiler

Nicole Bell

Alla Beregovoy

Jonathan Boss

Amilia Bowles

Remington Bowles

Darian Cabales

Shaunna Campbell

Kamilia Carnahan

Brenda Carpenter-Davis

Katelynn Chapman

Cheyanne Cline

Anna Cobb

Jonathan Cuddy

Savanna Davis

Myriah Edwards

Amber Godin

Jasmine Gray

Sophia Harper

Sumner Hayden

Rosalia Hennemann

Nicholas Kerle

Carston Lee

Ellianna Loudon

Beatrix Merlo-Morris

Megan Nichols

Joann Oliver

Isabella Sanchez

Sabella Smith

Benjamin Snively

Gage Spencer

Addison Stepchinski

Emily Stocker

Abby Strobel

Ileana Tassie

Kylee Willhite

Hailey Wissler

OCCUPATIONAL ENDORSEMENT CERTIFICATE

Cisco Certified Network Associate

Zackary Bowman

Refrigeration and Heating

Melanie Clayton

Jon Gordaoff

Keegan Longshore

Dean Tampke

Veterinary Assisting

Sophie Cin

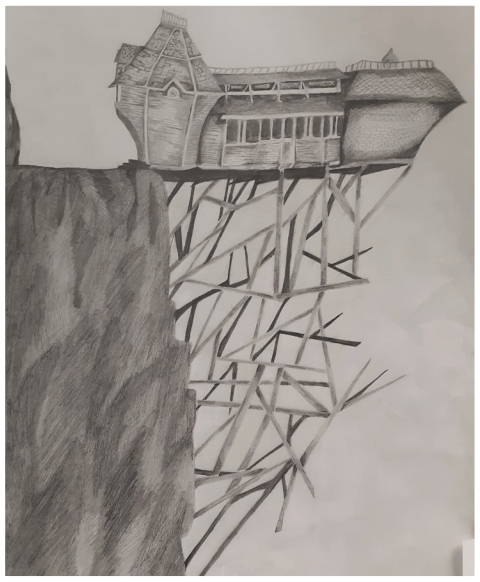
Abagail Harvey

Jacklyn Jennings

Lindsey Kinion

Angela Lamont

Daniel Miller



Above

By Justice Darby

The world stands before me

The air, the ground, the horizon lie

One thing I have yet to see

Is what is beyond, wayward sky

There any answers may be

In Honor and Memorial of Kenneth Newman and George McGillicuddy.

By Ryan Newman

Death is a matter of fact(to the point of even being a say of one of two constants, with taxes being the second). For as we were ash, to ash we become. However, for me anyway, the difference between having one that impacts you deeply compared to random people is stark. You truly do not realize what death is until it happens. I am simply recording what I have witnessed if not to reconcile myself, but to, perhaps give someone going through the same, now or later, console, or perhaps to simply fill a page, or a dollar, dollar and a half, two dollars.

The grief itself came in three parts for me, at least. Perhaps you've heard the stages of grief, for me, it represented the saying of relationships of parents being "Idolization, demonization, humanization" I'm not sure where that came from, but it feels fitting for what I had gone through, I cannot speak for all.

Firstly: idolization. When the death of my father first happened, naturally, it caused me to view him as perfect as he could be. There truly couldn't have been anything he did wrong.

Secondly: demonization. Wouldn't say per se this was completely separate from the former. Instead, it was more as the shock of the death was lessened, it caused anger from his former deeds and misdeeds. Further, his actions that indirectly led to this made him seem uncaring to all those around him. To say, essentially: how could you do this, Dad?

Finally: humanization. The realization that, indeed, he was imperfect, and an odd combination of both. To say either of the first is the best way to look at the person is foolish. Allow yourself to admit their faults, and enjoy their good parts simultaneously.

I do believe that there is truth to the stages of grief, just more nuanced than is shown in most forms. I don't think it's natural or even possible to simply go from one part to the next; Instead, they blend, one shows up more than the others, or one doesn't show up at all, or any combination of them.

I want to also point out something that probably will happen because of it: crying. Ultimately trying to prevent crying is nearly impossible. I also believe it is right in nature. When talking about Saint Thomas Aquinas on sorrow, Matt Fradd with Principles from Christendom College says "The second reason Aquinas says we shouldn't be afraid to cry or groan is "because an action, that befits a man according to his actual disposition, is always pleasant to him."In other words, if we're feeling really down, and we have to put on a happy face for people, we don't like that. It's not a pleasing thing. We like to be able to express on the outside what we're feeling on the inside."(getprinciple.com). I cannot think of a more poetic release of the pathos of death than tears. However, being stoic in nature, I should point out

See **MEMORIAL** *page 11*

The Mat-Su Monitor presents this interview with H.D. Foxe, a former student (and student worker) who graduated in 2019. She recently published her first novel, Winter Heart, which was the impetus for this interview. You can purchase the novel at https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0CVBMGFZ7 or by searching for Winter Heart by H.D. Foxe.

Monitor: What got you into writing?

H.D.: I've always been into writing. Even before I was an artist. My first stories were comics about ferrets hauling around oversized giraffe plushies, or delving into the experiences of pancakes about to be devoured. One of my longest works from my childhood was basically a Disneyland fanfiction in which my friend and I ride a train to the park to become Disney Princesses.

When I turned 11, I discovered some obscure series about dragons. Two of the most influential were the Dragons in our Midst series by Bryan Davis, and the DragonSpell series by Donita K. Paul. These stories had action, adventure, excitement, and even peril all revolving around boys and girls my age. I had always loved Lord of the Rings (though, as a kid, there was very little I could relate to as all of those characters are adults), as well as the Chronicles of Narnia (but those books are rather hard to read as an 11 year old sometimes), so those two series, written in modern English, about kids my age, really sparked my imagination and inspired a love of young adult fantasy.

These days, some of my influential authors are: Margaret Rogerson, Sarah J. Maas, Juliet Marillier, Stephanie Garber, and Bethany Atazadeh, among many others.

Monitor: Without spoilers, what is the book about?

H.D.: Winter Heart is the first of a four book series. It stars Fane, a runaway prince, and Niamh, a healer mage apprentice. After a failed assassination attempt, Fane runs for his life to the snowy country of Eira. There he's thrown into a world of magicians, relics, healers, and a mystery that may mean the end of everything he loves. Meanwhile, Niamh's position in the castle is threatened when a new, talented rival arrives and invades every area of Niamh's life. Niamh must learn how to untangle the mass of lies that comes against her, and win the position she's thought she's always wanted.

As soon as Fane and Niamh's paths cross, they're thrust into solving a dark mystery that neither of them are equipped to understand. The two of them must work together to find answers. Each of them have secrets of their own, however, and some secrets cannot stay hidden for long.

If readers enjoy a clean, slow-burn romance, unique magic systems, and lots of fun character dynamics, then I think they'll enjoy my book. :)

Monitor: Are there any authors you would say write similar books? Maybe not in terms of story, but in terms of characters and atmosphere?

H.D.: If I had to choose, I feel that my style is very similar to Allison Saft and Stephanie Garber. Maybe a little bit of Sarah J. Maas thrown in there, too. The way I write my characters, and the way I tell my story, is very much reflected in those authors' works. That's the funny thing about writing, though… Sometimes you can't really pin down where and how you picked up a certain style or influence. The books and movies I've consumed over my life, plus my personal experience as a human, all meld together in a way that only I can put on a page. I think that's the case for all creative people.

Monitor: What inspired you to write this book?

H.D.: The cozy, wintery atmosphere of the book is very much inspired by The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis, and my experiences living in Northern states for most of my life.

As for specific inspiration: this book was living in my head for ten years before anything went on the page. These were the characters I would draw for fun, and it was the story I'd work on with my friends to entertain them. When 2020 happened, I needed something to fill my time and I wanted something to show for all the work I'd poured into it over the years. I wrote 76,000 words in that first summer. (For context, that's as many words as the first Harry Potter book. Yeah, I didn't sleep much that summer.)

At the time, I was reading the Throne of Glass series for the first time (before it got super popular) and something about the way Maas writes her characters just lit my imagination on fire, and so it was the perfect storm to write my first book.

Monitor: How did you balance writing with working full-time and having a social life?

H.D.: I would joke and say that my social life was sacrificed for my craft, but that's not entirely true. I am fortunate enough to have friends that are also authors and artists, so my social time became brainstorming sessions, which was actually super helpful. Plus, I am allowed to read on my desk shifts at work, if there aren't any patrons to assist, and so that was how I got a lot of my reading done. Everything in my life became about supporting my writing, which may sound a bit obsessive to some…but writing my story, spending time with my characters, is actually FUN to me, so it's not a chore at all.

Monitor: What was the hardest part about writing a long novel?

H.D.: There's a term in the writing world for the middle of a book called "the muddy middle". This alludes to the challenge of keeping all your plates spinning in your plot, without the supporting set-up in the beginning, or

See **HD FOXE** *page 11*

Ask Sophia

Welcome to Ask Sophia, the Mat-Su Monitor's regular advice column. If you have a question you'd like to see answered, submit it anonymously at https://matsu.alaska.edu/monitor or in the Ask Sophia box in the FSM front lobby.

DEAR SOPHIA,

I want to go to a church but no one has taught me how. Am I allowed to just walk into one someday? Or do I need to pay and make reservations? What do I wear? What do I do? I figured this was the only way to get real advice.

Dear Friend,

There are plenty of way to get advise about church. Church is supposed to be a place where everyone is welcome. No membership fees or dress codes.

Everyone is meant to feel welcome in the church. Almost all churches around the world welcome everyone. You don't need someone to hold your hand; you can certainly go on your own.

You can visit the congregation website or speaking with the pastor in person, over the phone, by text, or e-mail might provide you with some background information. If you want to chat with someone, you might choose to visit a church during the week when it's not too crowded. On Sunday mornings, though, the doors are almost guaranteed to be open!

DEAR SOPHIA,

The neighborhood cat had another litter of kittens. What do we do? There's an orange one with blue eyes, among others, I didn't get to see the others' colors.

Dear Friend,

Taking on a pet is a big responsibility. Care and feeding of any animal is a big job. If you have the means, you can foster the kittens for adoption, or adopt them yourself. You can also do the same for a mother cat who is socialized.

You can contact the valley's Animal Care Shelter 907-746-5500. There, you rent a live trap bring the caught animals back to them. They can check for a chip and if necessary send the cats out to a rescue or put them up for adoption. At this time there is no trap, spay/neuter and release program in Alaska.

DEAR SOPHIA,

How do college students cope while sick in college

Dear Friend,

A lot of students feel the pressure to come to class even when they *are* sick. Missing a class can be detrimental to making the grade. That said, you can certainly do your part to ensure your classmates and instructors do not fall ill. WASH YOUR HANDS! Don't hang out and socialize - exposing others to your illness. It is still fashionable to wear a mask so you lower the risk of spreading germs. Find out if there is an option to attend the class online. Contacting your professor well in advance may present other opportunities as well.

DEAR SOPHIA,

When will there be a club for people with higher intellect? I grow tired of these mortals running around without amusing me.

Dear Friend,

Hmmmm...Are you saying you are immortal? ! Perhaps a visit to my friends at Mat-Su Health Services could help you out? 907-376-2411. PS. Students get 3 free visits.

LET'S HAVE A BALL

F	U	T	S	A	I	I	H	S	A	U	Q	S	H	K
O	K	C	A	S	Y	K	C	A	H	G	I	F	U	I
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From *Showcase page 1*

We had incredible support from Student Government, Fireside Books, our Director, staff on campus (especially from our Business Services), and faculty--and, very importantly, friends and family of our presenters. Thank you, everyone, for making this Student Showcase a success!

Question for the Summer

By Justice Darby

Solution (Problem on page 3)

1.) Start with the original integral and manipulate the differential term *dx*. The goal is to express it in terms of *d(x^2)*. This is done to simplify the partial fraction decomposition that comes later which treats *x^2* as if it were one variable. This is possible through the following definition:

$$dx = \frac{d(x^2)}{2x}$$

2.) Substituting into *dx* gives:

$$\int \frac{x^2-3}{2x^2\left(x^2+4\right)} d(x^2)$$

3.) Decompose the function in the integral into the following form assuming *x^2* is one variable:

$$\frac{x^2-3}{2x^2\left(x^2+4\right)} = \frac{A}{2x^2} + \frac{B}{x^2+4}$$

4.) By setting *x^2*=0, A=-3/4 and by setting *x^2*=-4, =7/8 should be noted that x^2=-4 cannot happen by normal means. However, since it is assumed that *x^2* is one variable rather than a variable squared, it makes it "possible" to do. As for why this works is something I cannot say however. Substituting *A* and *B* gives:

$$\int \left(-\frac{3}{8x^2} + \frac{7}{8\left(x^2+4\right)}\right) d(x^2)$$

5.) Switch *d(x^2)* back to d*x* through *d(x^2)=2xdx* , substitute it in, and simplify.

$$\int \left(-\frac{3}{4x} + \frac{7x}{4\left(x^2+4\right)}\right) dx$$

6.) The integral can now be evaluated as two separate integrals:

$$\int -\frac{3}{4x} dx \qquad \int \frac{7x}{4(x^2+4)} dx$$

7.) The integral of *-3/4x* is rather trivial to do so the other integral will be focused. A u-substitution can be done with *u=x^2+4* and differentiated to give *du=2xdx*. This can be re-organized and substituted into the integral as:

$$\int \frac{7}{8u} du$$

8.) This can be integrated with u substituted back in. Doing the integral of *-3/4x* also gives:

$$\int -\frac{3}{4x} dx = -\frac{3}{4}\ln\left(|x|\right) \quad \int \frac{7x}{8(x^2+4)} dx = \frac{7}{8}\ln\left(|x^2+4|\right)$$

9.) Finally, combining the results gives the result of the integration. Don't forget the !

$$\int \frac{x^2-3}{x\left(x^2+4\right)} dx = -\frac{3}{4}\ln\left(|x|\right) + \frac{7}{8}\ln\left(|x^2+4|\right) + C$$

See *Whittier page 1*

a 6.6-mile round-trip hike, is arguably one of the most beautiful trails in Alaska. You will see tropical-looking plants, waterfalls, and streams throughout the hike. There are many more things to do and see in the city and along the gateway to Prince William Sound, therefore it is definitely worth checking out!

See *Schools page 1*

spending,' and finds that it is not possible to sever certain provisions to create a reasonable narrowing construction. As a result, this Court finds that there is no workable way to construe the statutes to allow only constitutional spending, and AS 14.03.300-.310 must be struck down as unconstitutional in their entirety.

If the legislature believes these expenditures are necessary – then it is up to them to craft constitutional legislation to serve that purpose – that is not this Court's role." (Order Denying Defendant's Motion to Dismiss and Granting Planintiffs' Motion for Summary Judgment, Alexander. Acting Commissioner Teshner, Case Number 3 AN-23-04309CI)

Despite this being the right decision, we should have known that there was an issue in January 2023 when the court case began.

How does this affect you? This pertains as much to the brick-and-mortar schools as to the correspondence schools. Let us get down to the effects of the judge's decision made in April. For correspondence families, it creates uncertainty on moving forward in the next year because of new court actions and legislative responses. In simple terms, funding is not secured for anyone, including public schools, because any private educational organization that schools buy either supplies, learning materials, curricula, or software is not authorized for funding.

What needs to be done? The legislators need to get an amendment on the ballot so voters can decide if they want the schools to be able to do business with private educational institutions. Either removing the law or making it more specific, because of how vague it currently is.

See *Foxe page 9*

the resolution of the ending. I was maybe a bit ambitious with my first work, and I went for a split POV (point of view), which meant I had TWO main characters both working through their own journeys. There were a lot of things that fell by the wayside, or didn't make sense, and getting that cleaned up took a long time and lots of frustrated tears.

The second thing that was the hardest was the editing process. It's all fun and games when you're writing, having fun, drafting all your crazy ideas onto the page… And then when it's time to get down to brass tacks and cut scenes you love, or rewrite entire sections of the plot, then it becomes difficult to remember why you started in the first place. I started the first draft in July of 2020, and finished it in October of 2022… But the editing process ALONE took all the way from October 2022 to January 2024.

Honestly? If I'd known how hard, frustrating, and sometimes discouraging the process was going to be, I would have never started. I needed that excited, ambitious sparkle in my eye to start the first draft at all, and I'm so glad I did. It's been such a rewarding process in more ways than I can list here.

Monitor: Any final words?

H.D.: If you've ever wanted to write a book, there's no better time than the present. I can't express how rewarding it's been to hear how my book has impacted people, and it's what keeps me going to write the next one! Doing the hard thing, the things you've always dreamed of doing, will only serve to grow your confidence and make you a better person. Fear will be there. Allow it to sit with you, so you can show Fear it's not the boss. You have a story to tell, and there are people out there who need the words in your heart.

See *Memorial page 9*

(in my view) that crying purely to get attention corrupts the tears. Instead, let the tears flow naturally, and allow yourself to go somewhere to process them.

As time goes on, the tears lessen, and in their place a new normality. Further, we hear the call: to carry on... we'll carry on. Your memory, we'll carry on. I'm sure will wince at that reference and remember a certain phase they might have gone through. However, I do think (no matter the edginess of the band, et cetera) does very poetically describe what you feel after a death: the urge to carry on their memory. I am constantly doing, thinking, acting, saying, et cetera, things my Dad did, or would do. His jokes are my jokes. His stories are my stories. His foods are my foods. I also know stories going back 3 generations. I know about stories of him, my grandpa, and (although very few) of his grandpa and grandma. If they're still here, remember them. Write them down. Record them. You will thank yourself later. Although you're dead and gone, believe me, we'll carry on.

I believe most of this won't help, beyond the idea, someone else went through this, and (even slightly), had improved. I don't think it ever gets to where you don't miss them, and I even hope it doesn't. I hope those little things make me miss the people I left behind, those smells, those songs, those jokes. I hope sometimes the tears will flow. I hope I remember everything those people made me feel, for better, and worse. For now, all I can do is pray, and carry on.

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